

MOORE. (JAS) 10

THE FIRST CRUSADE

A POEM.

BY JAMES MOORE, M. D.,

AUTHOR OF

"The World's Battle;" "The Life of Washington;" "History of the Great Rebellion;" "The Kimeliad," a poem in three cantos; "The Shepherd of the Wissahickon," a poem in three cantos; "Kilpatrick and our Cavalry;" "The Centennial," a poem; "The Triumph of Truth;" "The City of God;" "Our Redeemer's Kingdom;" "The Mansions in Heaven;" "Saint Paul;" "The Star in the East;" "Happiness;" "Divine Attributes;" "Divine Providence;" "Redeeming the Time;" "The Dream of Life;" "What is Man?" "The Necklace;" "Willard Glazier, the Cavalier;" "The Children of Pride;" "Redemption;" "The Rival Queens," "Derry Delivered," &c.

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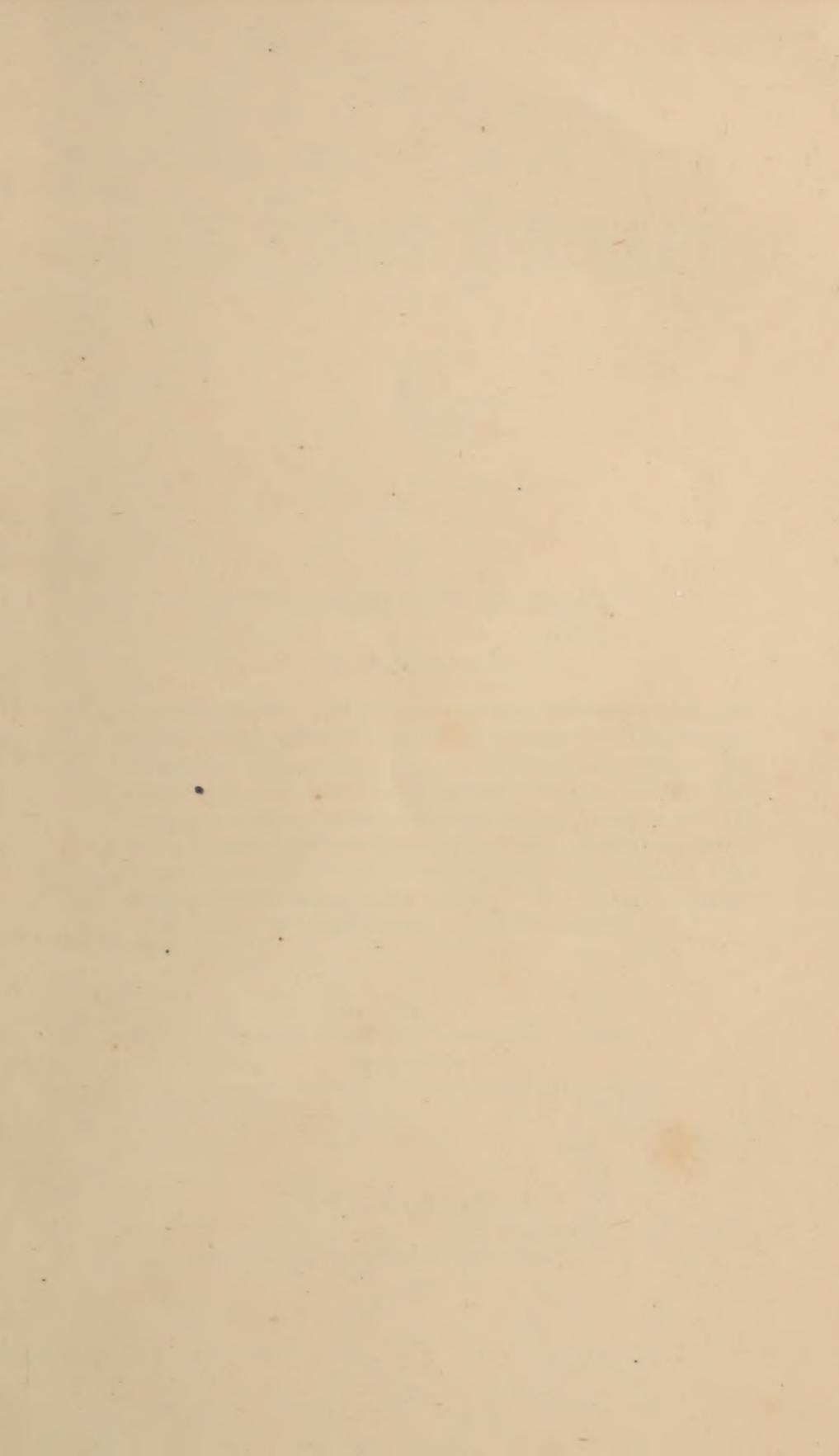
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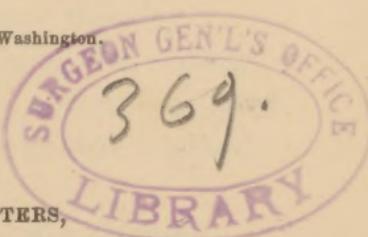
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PREFACE.

THE Crusades were among the most remarkable events that ever occurred in the history of mankind; but whether they were on the whole beneficial to the world, or otherwise, has been doubted by many. It is wonderful to relate that, after severe sufferings, and great loss of life, the Christians gained the Holy City, and established in Palestine what was for many years known as the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem, which was at length lost, and caused, in the process of events, the fall of Constantinople, and the sway of the Turks, in a portion of Europe, itself. Following the capture of this city, and the migrations of many learned Grecians to Italy and other countries of the West, there occurred a revival of learning, in which the works of the great poets, historians, and philosophers of old, became known, which resulted in the diffusion of light throughout all countries, and in the cultivation of the sciences and arts, whose blessings we so richly enjoy at this day.

This present outline of the First Crusade, if favorably received, may be followed by others embracing the entire period, chief events, and incidents that marked them all.

JAMES MOORE.

THE FIRST CRUSADE.

ENCHANTING Tasso's muse the theme has sung,
Once resonant by every Christian tongue,
When Europe roused her warriors sent forth,
And poured their swarms of base and men of worth
On Asia's fields, 'gainst Saracenic host,
In which whole myriads disappeared and lost,
While others rushed their vacant space to fill,
And in like contest met with good or ill.
Now victors, sweeping all their foes away ;
Now vanquished, losing their victorious sway ;
'Till all the sacred land of Palestine
Trodden by footsteps of the Man Divine,
The holy tomb and each all-hallowed place,
Became the prey of an ungodly race.
The blessed cross must to the crescent yield,
And Christian warriors vanish from the field,
'Till th' usurping infidel o'erflows,
And threatens Europe's self with mighty woes
When Constantine's fair city they surround,
Beleaguer, capture, and no help is found
To drive the cruel foe's insulting boasts
From the strong walls and fair romantic coasts.
But, doomed to fall, disgrace to Christian name,
They stain the lustre of her former fame,
Turn holy temples of the Christian creed
To mosques, where soul-destroying errors breed.

Because of crosses on their coats displayed,
 The warriors called their enterprise “crusade”;
 And several for two centuries took place,
 Of which my purpose is the first to trace.
 But ere description comes we must allude
 To various motives to be understood.
 For never in the world before or since
 Did such enthusiasm e'er evince,
 The vast upheaving of all nations, classes,
 Or what in modern phrase we term the masses.
 The western world entire—entire was shaken,
 And struggling passions in each bosom waken !
 Of martial pride and deep humiliation,
 Desire and lust, devotion, emulation,
 Remorse, revenge, the love of wealth and money,
 And all the passions that can sway the many,
 The things of time and of eternity,
 The good and bad, coming both variously,
 And where the wicked sought a fair pretence,
 To hide his lust, the good in penitence,
 Their kingdoms gave, their fair possessions all,
 Their swords and lives to prosper or to fall,
 To free the holy city and the land
 From hostile foes and Saracenic band;
 This the chief motive of this wondrous age,
 Supplying place of pious pilgrimage,
 Indulgence plenary did them await,
 And easy entrance at the heavenly gate.

The noble Norman race when Christianized
 Full many a scheme of pilgrimage devised,
 And mingling motives in their breasts arose,
 Valor, devotion, oft more friends than foes,
 For Sicily, part Italy and France,
 On their excursions, yields to warlike lance;
 Yet uncontented still one prince alone
 Attempted to subvert th' Eastern throne,

And now the mailed barons ready stand
 To urge their way, redeem the holy land,
 And wrench from the fierce Moslem's cruel power
 Jerusalem and the most sacred dower
 Of that loved sepulchre where Jesus lay,
 And holy Church that told His rising day.

For months the Fatimites these places held,
 Whose insults oft the Christians repelled ;
 And chief the holy hermit Peter saw,
 These enemies to God and to His law,
 With indignation, that his breast soon fired,
 And sent him forth as holy saint inspired,
 To preach deliverance and retaliation,
 And rouse the just revenge of many a nation.
 Pope Gregory was roused, and Urban next,
 In Claremont's council, and a day was fixed,
 " "Tis the will of God!" rose from the people mixed.
 But ere the mighty men were well prepared,
 The common people, who their ardor shared,
 Beneath the Hermit's guidance ready stand,
 In ardent crowds, from many a distant land ;
 Intent, unarmed, and in war untrained,
 Unused to discipline, which they disdained,
 To meet the foe, engage him in the fight,
 And put their enemies to speedy flight ;
 A part of these was by one Walter led,
 Called impecunious; and these, instead
 Of armed discipline, were rabble all,
 Who plundered as they went in countries full
 Whene'er they passed to various excess
 That seldom saved them from severe distress,
 'Till in the end the wonder too is small ;
 They perished almost ; few remained at all.
 A third host, too, the scum of nations, fell
 Slain by their foes, their bones were left to tell,

Heaped up in piles, ill-omened for the host,
 How vast a number here their lives had lost ;
 For of these first divisions, it was said,
 Two hundred thousand men in earth were laid ;
 Amongst these bands women, children, too,
 Which makes humanity such rashness rue ;
 Enthusiasts these, and often stained by crime,
 And wicked wretches yielding to the clime,
 Hunger, disease, the sword and treachery,
 Cut off untimely and by dire villainy.
 A mighty host of barons mailed in steel,
 With prancing chargers taught the spurs to feel,
 And with their evolutions to perform
 The duties of the field in every form,
 Were ready meanwhile to fulfill their vow,
 Assault the foe and 'mid his ranks to plough
 With sabres keen and heavy iron lance,
 Who rode like centaurs, knew how to advance,
 To wheel, recede, or urge with steady line,
 In which true valor, strength and skill combine.
 These men were nobles, many far renowned
 For warlike prowess ; none were royal found,
 For sovereigns then had other acts to play,
 Though the most potent joined at later day.
 Pope Urban too had business to detain
 His personal attendance on the train,
 Puy's warlike prelate in his stead is sent,
 The princes with his leadership content.

The warlike chiefs though I can't name them all
 Were first Lorraine's great duke ; fame's trumpet call
 Resounds his name throughout the universe,
 For all men loved his glory to rehearse,
 A warrior bold, a leader prudent, sage,
 The bright example of a barbarous age,
 Whose piety and patience were renowned,
 With numerous virtues in the nations round.

His brother Baldwin was unlike to him,
 His craft and selfishness his lustre dim,
 Though well redeemed in time as it appears,
 His virtues clearly shine for eighteen years.
 Another brother Eustace joined the train,
 A kinsman Baldwin, too, but of these twain
 I little have to say, and pass them fain ;
 Vermandois' Count to avarice was given,
 And oft regarded not his vow to heaven,
 Too often swayed by avarice or fear,
 Related to the French king very near.

The Duke of Normandy, famed Robert named,
 Counts Stephen, Robert, Raymond, Flanders claimed,
 And Chartres and Thoulouse, Taranto's princee
 Called Boehmond, Guiscard's son, who did evince
 The warlike qualities of hero bold ;
 Illustrious Tancred, of him are told
 Delightful tales in story and romance,
 As brave a warrior as e'er couched a lancee,
 Free, bold, and generous, of noble mind,
 As one can in all earlier history find.

The veteran count of Thoulouse, selfish, cold,
 Vindictive, proud, fanatic growing old,
 Yet struggled harder still for wealth and fame,
 As most his compeers did, while him they blame.
 The Norman Robert all accounted brave,
 But headstrong rash, and oft his passions' slave,
 Irresolute, so none a trust secure could have.

Through various countries these heroes passed,
 Constantinople saw their host at last,
 But not at once arrived each, some crossed o'er
 And pitched their tents on Asia's fertile shore.
 We pass the scenes of discord, war, and peace,
 'Twixt them and him who boasted to rule Greece,

Or what was left of ancient Roman sway,
 Once mistress of the world in earlier day.
 With treachery and craft Comnenus still
 Full of hypocrisy the throne did fill.
 He hated the crusaders scarcely less,
 Than moslems, and his very fickleness,
 And hollow-hearted conduct let them see,
 How much they ought to fear his treachery.

At length the great crusading levies gain
 Their union on fair Asia Minor's plain :
 A numerous host of warlike chivalry,
 Counted one hundred thousand cavalry ;
 With multitudes of infantry, no doubt,
 It would be hard their numbers to compute ;
 The crowd of footmen carried the cross-bow
 And served as archers, pioneers, and so ;
 More lightly armed were scouts, indifferent
 The services on which they might be sent ;
 The army's strength was in the heavy horse,
 The flower of Europe, a most potent force ;
 Knights, squires and hardy men at arms in field,
 Bore helmet, heavy coat of mail, and shield :
 The lance, the weighty battle-axe, and mace
 Of ponderous iron, made them hard to face ;
 Their's was a splendid, glittering array,
 Beneath their pennons and fair banners gay,
 The surcoats ermined, made a fair display
 Of rich, and rare, and grand embroidery ;
 Inlaid with gold and gems shone costly shield,
 Or head-piece glittering, glory in the field :
 Their warlike steeds as conscious of the fight,
 Displayed like spirit as the noble knight.

Unto Jerusalem their route now lay,
 Nicea, on a plain, was in their way,

A city strong by nature made and art,
 Chief of Roum's kingdom and this ere they part,
 With high resolve determine if they can,
 To wrench it from the Sultan Solyman ;
 A double wall both very thick and high,
 Surrounded this with ditch quite deep ; and nigh
 Three hundred three score towers were found,
 A strong, brave garrison, defends all round.
 The city rested on extensive lake,
 And Solyman with Turkish horse could make
 With utmost ease an aid to the defense,
 And harrass the besiegers still from thence.
 The bold crusaders this siege undertake,
 Though obstinate defense the foe would make,
 And though their numbers are so great, 'tis found
 The compass of the walls they can't surround.

Each leader in his place attack directs,
 And each from his own arm success expects,
 For though the princes counsel and consult,
 No general guides or leads to the result.
 'Tis emulation, glory them inspires,
 And rival valor still their bosoms fires ;
 Each pushes his attacks as best he may,
 With such machines and towers as former day
 Had left the middle age ; the belfry, ram,
 The moving towers in which their men they cram :
 The fox, or cat, the sap so slow, the mine,
 They use in several or all combine.
 The Sultan meanwhile makes a fierce attack,
 But after bloody struggle is hurled back ;
 And leaves Nicea to its certain fate,
 For, from the lake it must attack await,
 By which communication now is o'er,
 The mine is sprung—a crash—a breach—no more
 Can the defense avail ; but by delay,
 The Sultan's wife contrives to escape away,

But captured by imperial Butomite,
 He took the queen, and what was far from right,
 Released her and the city's capture gained,
 And on it raised the banner; sight which pained
 The soldiers valiant fighting for the cross.
 Stung to the quick to have sustained such loss,
 Ulterior objects make them to restrain
 Their indignation; soon they leave the plain,
 And breaking camp in some few days pursue
 Their onward march, Jerusalem in view.

Through Asia Minor now their passage lay,
 To Syria five hundred miles away,
 And on their march it was the Sultan's care
 For obstinate resistance to prepare.
 To his own subjects, chiefs of kindred race,
 He sends for aid; from all sides to the place
 Where he his standard reared, in haste they ride,
 Three hundred thousand horse, all on his side.
 On the crusaders' flanks some days they hung,
 And all attack forbore; but not for long;
 For when two columns take a different way,
 And thus divided is the strong array,
 Duke Godfrey and Vermandois' Count, and he,
 The Count of Thoulouse, march on merrily.
 One column theirs; the other Boehmond leads,
 With Tancred, Norman Robert, and the steeds
 That follow Flanders' Count, and Chartres' too;
 This column last, the Sultan held in view.
 Near Doryleum, fifty miles from Nice,
 The Turkish swarms surround it in a trice,
 With furious onset and unearthly yells,
 And shout that dreadfully resounds and swells.
 It was a fearful moment; the surprise,
 The Turkish swarms and onset meet their eyes,
 And sudden sends throughout the whole array,
 'Midst Christian ranks, disorder and dismay.

Three mighty Norman leaders on that day,
Their noble valor, and high worth display :
Boehmond, and Tancred and Duke Robert too,
Make numerous foes the fiery onset rue ;
The light armed Turks their clouds of arrows cast
Upon the heavy armed ; retreating fast,
To shun the near encounter and let fly,
Whereby unbarbed horses many die :
And oft their riders where the armor's space
Not well united gives the missiles place.
Their armor's weight, the heat, the Knights oppress,
And burning thirst occasions deep distress,
The sultry clime, fatigue and fell despair,
O'ercame the bold crusaders everywhere.
Their leaders in retreat draw from the field,
The exhausted troops, now nearly forced to yield ;
The unbelievers now their camp attack,
Murder the pilgrims, women and who lack
As children strength, or who can not defend ;
But, soon their cruelty has reached an end,
For Boehmond rushing on in furious charge,
With his companions sets them soon at large.
And fierce the contest now ; the foemen close,
And loud the war shout from all sides arose
'Till Godfrey and Vermandois join their aid,
With forty thousand men ; who soon repaid
Upon the infidels their cruel work,
And swept the field of every murderous Turk ;
When charged by Raymond suddenly in flank,
Defeats and puts to flight each hostile rank,
With thirty thousand of their number slain
Whose bodies strewed the bloody spacious plain ;
The Christians now their march all unopposed
Were to the Sultan's rage no more exposed,
But what they suffered in their weary way,
When hundreds often died e'en in a day,

From hunger, heat, and thirst, and fell disease,
 Is fearful to relate and none would please ;
 Hence let us pass it o'er and the dispute,
 First Baldwin fierce and Tancred so acute,
 That might have ended illy for the cause,
 And for themselves who broke the sacred laws.
 This Baldwin soon Edessa gains and there
 Does principality for himself prepare,
 Which during fifty years e'en at the least,
 Was an important outwork in the East.

To Antioch the army now had come,
 Syria's ancient capital, and some
 Few traces of its grandeur once were still
 In it perceived ; Turkish Baghatian's will
 Ten thousand horse and twice as many foot
 Obey ; this prince, who did his strength compute
 Equal to any force that might assail,
 And finding that his bravest efforts fail
 Th' invading army even to impede,
 Within the walls he leads his troops with speed.
 The bridge on the Orentes' iron gates
 Duke Robert seizes ; and as quick defeats
 All efforts that the advanced guard detain,
 They cross the river, fill the neighboring plain ;
 The city was most strongly fortified,
 A wall, for miles around access denied,
 The works a formidable aspect wear,
 Th' invading force 'gainst them is brought to bear.
 Of the fine gates two uninvested were,
 And still through these by Baghatian's care,
 To get supplies and several sallies try,
 And burn the engines as the wood was dry.
 From want and from disease, the Christians know
 What hardships soldiers brave must undergo,
 Provisions scarce and forage nowhere found,
 Approaching winter freezing all the ground.

The horses nearly all were slain for food :
 Of all they had, two thousand to the good
 Remained to those on Antiochian plain
 Drenched with the showers of copious wintry rain ;
 Contagious diseases, too, prevailed,
 And loss of thousands were too soon bewailed.
 Desertions, too, were common, and the vow
 Has little influence o'er the many now :
 Some flee to Baldwin, or Cilician town,
 Some leaders leave and forfeit their renown ;
 And e'en the holy hermit it is said,
 Would but for active Tancred soon have fled ;
 The emperor's lieutenant made retreat,
 Unto such treacherous master servant meet.

When spring returned some fresh supplies arrive,
 Which seem to keep themselves and hopes alive :
 But Turks attack the convoys and prevent
 The benefits sometimes the friends had sent.
 On one occasion twenty thousand men,
 Led by three emir's are defeated, when
 Raymond and Bohemond made fierce attack.
 Who drove the Moslem force in slaughter back ;
 But the same leaders suddenly assailed
 Conveying from the coast, the foe prevailed,
 And put to rout and but for Godfrey's aid,
 They would have surely rued the ambuscade.
 The Turkish governor a sally made,
 And here Duke Godfrey's valor was displayed,
 For rushing back he cut off his retreat,
 And here the foes with mutual fury meet ;
 The Christian Knights a victory obtain,
 And close the other gates by which again
 They soon perceive as getting the supply,
 Which the closed gates to wily foes deny.

At last a traitor offers to betray
 The town for great reward ; and on a day,
 Boehmond unto the council soon makes known,
 Provided he is governor alone,
 He will unfold a means the same to gain,
 Which otherwise attempt were but in vain.
 His selfish policy they disapprove,
 They justly reprobate his ill-self love ;
 What can they do ! the bargain soon is made,
 And 'gainst the town the warriors arrayed.
 The traitor scales the wall in dead of night,
 The guards are slain and soldiers put to flight.
 Then slaughter, furious, indiscriminate,
 And bloodshed all within the place await,
 Then Boehmond his object soon attained,
 In ten hundred ninety-eight the city gained.

Such was the way and means Crusaders made
 Their onward progress in the first crusade.
 Disunion had the Moslem kept apart,
 But now they joined and practiced every art
 By which the Christian force to overthrow,
 And aim at Antioch the fatal blow.
 Kerboga, Mosul's prince and Solyman
 Command their forces, and the rumor ran
 Four hundred thousand cavalry combine
 The Christians to attack and force their line.
 The bold Crusaders saw their swarming host
 Camped on the plains, nor deemed their hopes were lost.
 Their 'minished force within the city's bounds,
 They quickly draw, and them the foe surrounds.
 Communication all complete cut off,
 They knew the contest would be keen and tough,
 And grevious famine soon their ranks assailed,
 While dreadful hardship and disease prevailed,
 And without help or hope they had to strive,
 Deserted by all aid to bid them live.

The deepest gloom and the most fell despair
 Reigned all around, prevailing everywhere,
 Till their expiring hopes again are roused
 By holy vision to a priest disclosed ;
 His name, Barthelemy, who, in his trance,
 Beheld the vision of the very lance,
 Or its steel head, at least, that once had made
 The wound in the Redeemer's sacred side,
 That now lay in St. Peter's temple, where
 Beneath the altar 'twould be found with care.
 This sacred weapon, carried against the host
 Of infidels would make their battle lost,
 Its mystic presence would their hearts so rend,
 God's people would have victory in the end.
 Two days in solemn preparation spent,
 With holy prayer, princes and clergy went,
 Twelve feet in depth they 'neath the altar try,
 The sacred lance to find, nor can desery :
 Barthelemy descended when 'twas dark,
 And after some delay the lance did mark ;
 The joy among the Christians can't be told,
 They wrap it in a costly cloth of gold ;
 And to Kerboga faithful Peter send,
 Whose message had in it this friendly end ;
 From Syria's sacred land at once to part,
 Or turn a Christian with believing heart.
 Kerboga this refused, the Christians arm,
 The gates are opened, forth the faithful swarm
 In twelve divisions from the gates they go,
 The clergy singing in procession slow.

The holy bishop with the sacred lance
 On foot proceeds with sacred symbols ; once
 He paused at bridge that did Orentes span,
 And then discourse pathetical began ;
 The army blessed, and then each warlike lord
 Addressed his efforts to unsheathe the sword,

Attack the unbelievers—dash them down
 And gain the victory with great renown,
 Assisted, it is said, by several saints,
 Saints Maurice, George, and Theodore; at once
 Responsive shouts, “It is the will of God,”
 Arose, and what has e'er his power withstood?
 But certain 'tis the foe was overthrown
 In bloody slaughter, and heaven saved her own.

At captured Antioch the troops delay
 On various pretexts they pretend to stay,
 The leaders mostly objects of their own
 Pursue, nor seek the common weal alone.
 The army, too, required a time to rest.
 The Syrian desert to traverse at best
 No easy task: but in the summer heat
 Th' attempt would have attendant peril great.
 The bravest knights and soldiers sought to find
 In the new Christian states, what to their mind
 Seemed better than their early enterprise
 On which, seduced, they looked with other eyes.
 Improvidence for the third time induced
 Famine and pestilence; and these produced
 Such scourge, one hundred thousand people fell
 Amid calamities no tongue can tell.

The host, almost entire demoralized,
 Naught but licentious pleasure greatly prized.
 So great the profligacy that found place,
 These men became, in brief, a godless race.
 Virtue, restraint, and discipline were lost;
 Selfish brutality soon seized the host,
 And o'er their minds the clergy naught could do
 While some relate they were abandoned, too,
 But such a charge applied to very few.
 The multitude at length urged each bold chief
 To lead them on, and so they marched, in brief.

The mighty army now reduced was small—
Scarce more than one score thousand men in all ;
But veteran and mighty warriors bold,
Led on by chiefs who constant kept their hold
Through great temptations and in fiery trial,
And triumphed by a noble self-denial.
Three hundred miles, their route to Jaffa lay,
From Antioch ; along the sea-side way,
Where vessels trading could their wants supply :
And unopposed by emirs they pass by ;
Arrived at Jaffa, then the coast they part,
To reach Jerusalem fires every heart ;
And as they tread the Scripture's sacred scenes,
The places found engrossing potent means,
To draw their thoughts to Him who there had trod,
Perhaps in the same path along the road.
His miracles and wonders they recall,
His virtues, goodness, which is over all,
His life, and death, his rising from the tomb.
Such thoughts as these occur, and then they come
Unto their journey's end, with rapture gaze,
And mingled joy and gladness, and amaze,
On the holy city, which from every nation
Jehovah chose for his own habitation ;
Where the Redeemer suffered too and died.
Praise, self-abasement, and emotions hide,
They can not ; with one impulse these
Water the sacred soil with tears on prostrate knees ;
The holy city yet is not their own,
But well defended, not by walls alone
And lofty towers, but forty thousand men,
Abundantly supplied, repaired again
The ancient places forming each defense—
The craggy precipices barred assault or sally thence.
The camp was pitched—nor will I stop to tell
What here or there during the siege befel.

Suffice to say, the city fell at last ;
And captured by assault, the time was past
For mercy. None was shown. The dripping sword
Was sheathed in many a breast. What, not afford
Pity to helpless women, infants, aged !
No ! Slaughter, the incarnate demon, raged !
And in one mosque ten thousand persons fell
In blood stained murder—dreadful 'tis to tell.
Throughout the city, e'en in every house
Fierce massacre still raged, and no excuse
Could any from the fearful fate restrain ;
Mercy, if asked, it asked were vain.
The slaughter was renewed, when the tired arm
Could slay no more, and rested from its harm.
The Jews in synagogues consumed with fire,
Experienced dreadful torments, so expire.
Captives and prisoners met a common fate ;
Nor children at the breast escaped the fatal hate.
When this was done, or partly so at least,
The warriors wash or change their clothes in haste.
Duke Godfrey donned a linen tunic white,
And felt no doubt what lately done was right,
As cutting off each vile Amalekite.
With bared head and feet the holy place
Where Christ was laid he sought with pious grace,
Within the Holy Sepulchre, and where
He spent the hour in devotion prayer.
In solemn order to give thanks they go
Unto Mount Calvary, in procession slow.
And the aged hermit now might well rejoice
In the applause received from common voice.
The journey ended, they are joyful now,
Accomplishing the object of their vow ;
And sovereignty must now attention claim
A ruler from some warrior of fame.
The choice on Godfrey fell—and chosen he
Performed his duties most religiously.

The kingdom of Jerusalem was his,
 The title, king, he humbly thought amiss,
 And hence for the same cause another took,
 But ruled with wisdom, which he ne'er forsook.
 Respected ruled awhile 'mid many cares,
 And not for long, his fame good Tancred shares ;
 But most crusaders were less generous far ;
 Each of these two shines forth as beauteous star.

How wonderful the impulse vast which made
 Whole nations rush to arms in the crusade !
 They left their fields, their trades, and every art,
 That in the movement each might bear a part ;
 Some left their pulpits, some forsook the law,
 The doctor left his patients ; people saw
 The mail-clad baron and his prancing steed
 Ready equipped for any daring deed,
 The knight and squire were ready ; every art
 Was turned to martial use, and every heart
 Throughout the land was with the frenzy filled ;
 The plow stood still, the farm remained untilled,
 Some sold their all to purchase horse and arms—
 Then was the time to cheaply buy up farms.
 Old castles changed their owners, and the new,
 Cared little what the tenantry might do,
 For all was changed and old was out of date,
 And chance and change soon altered many a fate.
 New lords arose and hence a change of laws,
 Events rushed on without a partial pause :
 That age has left its imprint upon this
 And many things were bettered, once amiss ;
 The good and evil were most strangely mixed,
 And what was dubious became now fixed :
 While commerce felt the impulse, and exchange
 Of the world's products, had a wider range ;
 Ideas were diffused, and intercourse
 Proved oft of benefit, a fruitful source ;

The nations maritime a harvest drew,
 Venice, Genoa, always kept in view
 Each just advantage they could fairly reap,
 And for the times made transportation cheap,
 Wafting in galleys from each Eastern clime
 The articles so sought for in our time.

The age was barbarous: and violence
 Appealed to arms not merely for defense,
 But used aggressively; the will of heaven,
 They deemed most surely, clearly, too, was given
 When champions fought in combat to sustain
 The dubious cause upon the listed plain.
 Th' ordeal too, by water or by fire,
 Was such as few of us would now desire;
 In sooth it was a very ticklish thing,
 But oft about did peaceful ending bring.
 The barons turbulent in check were held
 By power of the clergy, who oft quelled
 Their deadly animosity, and trod
 Upon their pride restrained, by "Truce of God."
 The love of wealth, of pleasure, and of fame,
 Ambition, selfishness, to gain a name,
 Wrought in the hearts of most the cross to bear
 Upon their shields and arms; but seldom where
 The Christian carries it, and will not part:
 The inmost shrine of a believing heart.
 Whate'er their faults, all honor to the throng
 Heroic brave, who swept the field along
 With fiery steed and formidable lance
 To brave the foe in combat, and advance
 The sacred ensign in the bloody field,
 And fought till death, unused to flee or yield.
 Their bodies oft the sanguine field bestrewed,
 Oft 'gainst a host a little band has stood;
 But courage, valor, skill, in grand display,
 Oft crowned with victory a desperate day.

Repelled the Saracen, whose mighty hosts
 Oft threatened Europe's ill-defended coasts,
 And in the end to their own land confined,
 Where firm possession they no longer find ;
 And whence ere long their empire in decay
 Like hoar frost in the sun will fade away ;
 How many left that ne'er again returned !
 How many o'er their best beloved then mourned !
 Widows and orphans, ah, how many they
 Left desolate until their dying day !
 How many faithless proved, by beauty caught,
 Ensnared and captured ! For it was the lot
 Of some the true faith even to exchange
 And wear the turban, which is very strange
 To people now alive, but let them think
 How beauty oft leads to perdition's brink—
 A slippery path they tread their vows who break ;
 But so 'twas ever, for the flesh is weak.
 'Tis strange to think the holy city saw
 A people ruled once more by Christian law ;
 One might suppose what gained with so much blood
 A longer time or e'en till now had stood,
 But when the end arrived at, many left,
 And Godfrey even was of force bereft.
 The wonder is he could himself sustain,
 To hope for help too often was in vain,
 For swift as lightning on its fiery track,
 Crusaders left their duty, hurried back,
 And the new kingdom for its foes too frail,
 Found in the end it could no more prevail.
 'Twas deemed quite sad that Palestine should be
 Beneath the unbelievers ; to set free
 The land in which the Saviour lived and died,
 Where he was born, wrought wonders, crucified,
 From whence he rose again, again will reign,
 Caused all the godly ever poignant pain.

Then, when the holy hermit Peter, viewed
The insults and the state in which there stood
All Christians who resorted in that age
To make in holy places pilgrimage,
He preached the cross, and Europe caught the flame—
“It is the will of God,” they cry with loud acclaim.
Some, holy father Peter underrate,
But sure his zeal and piety were great ;
The pope and patriarch their aid refused
At first to lend ; this might have well excused
An ordinary man, and would the most,
But this good man had counted all the cost,
With utmost vigour, straining every nerve,
He traveled Europe through the cause to serve,
Exhorting prince and peasant for his Lord
Against th’ infidels to draw the sword,
And showed a letter to the people given,
To stir them up, and written, too, in heaven ;
There is no doubt he showed the word of God,
The chart correct to show th’ heavenly road.
His influence and his success were great,
Nor has the world beheld his like of late.

